Three faces of Global Citizenship Education: IB schools' self-representations in four local contexts

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Abstract

This study examines the construction and meaning of international education as manifested by IB schools in four locations: Chicago, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, and the United Arab Emirates. Through analysis of schools' websites, we identify three major approaches for constructing schools' image: globally acknowledged quality, moral global citizenship, and neoliberal global citizenship. We show how these approaches are employed in each of the contexts and discuss theoretical implications. We suggest further nuanced conceptualization of global citizenship education following blooming discourse developed through this special issue and through engagement with contemporary understandings of this concept. Specifically, we reveal how IB accredited schools vary in their interpretations of this discourse across various contexts. In light of the growing prominence of International Baccalaureate Organization programs worldwide, it is important to foster theoretical discourse on its agenda and manifestations.

Introduction

A notable development in contemporary education is the rapid growth of international schooling throughout much of the world (Authors, 2015; Bunnell, 2008a; Fielding & Vidovich, 2016). International schools have proliferated worldwide from approximately 50 schools in the 1960s to over 7,000 schools at present. The sector is projected to grow to 11,000 schools teaching six million students by the year 2022 (Brummitt & Keeling, 2013; Bunnell, 2008a). Along with the growing number of international schools, the widespread recognition of global dimensions in education (such as global citizenship education, education for sustainable development and human rights education) has risen as well (Authors, 2018; Kidson, Odhiambo, & Wilson, 2018; Savvides, 2006).

Despite the well-developed academic discourse on its meanings and manifestations (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Hayden & Thomson, 2013), the concept of international education is often presented as a singular phenomenon (Lightman, 2016; Madge et al., 2015). In other words, a widespread assumption is that there is one international education and curricula that are essentially standardized (perhaps with minor variations) across different contexts.

The standardization of international education is epitomized by the growth of International Baccalaureate (IB) programs delivered through infrastructure of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), which is often depicted as synonymous to the provision of international education (Bunnell, Fertig, & James, 2017; Hayden & McIntosh, 2018). The IBO was founded as a nonprofit educational organization in 1968 in Geneva, Switzerland, with the purpose of providing a university preparatory curriculum for the children of the mobile business and diplomatic elite (Peterson, 1987). Currently, the organization strives towards broader recognition of its curriculum by higher education institutions as well as by the general public, with the purpose of establishing a golden standard for international schools and entering the field of national curricular provision in many countries including the UK (Bunnell, 2008b; Resnik, 2016). The IB is usually characterized as pursuing dual missions, holding rigorous standards of educational achievements while also promoting ideological stances towards education for peace and sustainability (Tarc, 2009).

The IB's expansion strategy is executed in the context of a notable growth in numbers of both international schools and international streams within local schools, globally (Authors, 2015; Bunnell, 2008a). Nevertheless, assessment of the IB's global geographic spread of schools reveals a distinct presence and growth over the years, with a majority of IB World Schools still located in countries in the global North (Gardner-McTaggart, 2011). Moreover, critique of the IB mainly concerns the organization's western orientation in the context of cultural domination, as well as the promotion of a new global, mobile, elite social strata which employs this diploma as a privileged and

unequal form of global citizenship, that is further reproduced through the systems of higher education (Authors, 2018; Bunnell, 2010).

This study questions the cohesiveness of IB schools as a universal construct and examines the extent to which schools' representation is associated with different educational purposes and approaches across social and economic contexts and various modes of provision (private vs public schooling). We comparatively examine schools' websites in four social-cultural and educational contexts; namely, Chicago (US) representing a location where IB embedded in public schooling through state funding, serving mainly unprivileged local population, the Netherlands where IB is mainly provided through private schools, although these are serving only small percentage of the country population, mainly families with mobility background, Hong Kong where IB practiced mainly in private international schools serving affluent international audience, and the United Arab Emirates where IB is practiced in international schools serving local elite and international audience. We do so through systematic content analysis of the texts presented on websites of IB World Schools, across the above-mentioned locations. As IB continues to expand in scope and significance, slowly being embedded in the mainstream state schooling in many countries including the UK, Australia and the US, understanding how schools internalize and implement it is vital. We proceed by presenting the theoretical orientation for this study, addressing specifically the ambiguity of international schooling and the dual version of the IB, and then we proceed with methodology and finally findings and discussion, where we first present three emerging approaches that schools employ and then we provide a comparative analysis amongst the various locations, discussing possible implications. We argue that the websites of the examined schools preach for three distinct types of global citizenship education (GCE), two of which related to the IB original goals and the third developed unintentionally due to the nature of education market in specific locations. We discuss the potential implications of such representations to the schools in question and more broadly.

Invoking the global in the international schooling

Scholars (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009) often characterize the process of globalization as operating through various discourses of meanings and assumptions that transcend national borders. This understanding is emphasized in Carney's (2008:69) discussion of policyscapes as "globalized messages projected across educational spaces and translated in ways that resonate in particular contexts." A similar approach focuses on the importance of 'global imaginaries'—common visions of alternative realities and means to realize these visions—as ways to understand the global discourse in education (Ball, 2012; Rizvi and Lingard, 2009). The analyses applying both

of these concepts focus on the ideational or ideological manifestations of globalization; the consciousness of global discourses largely transcends contexts, which become 'resonators' for these ideas. In contrast, other work has placed greater emphasis on the intersection of global concepts and local meanings, either by examining the two as 'dialectic' (Arnove et al., 2012) or through examinations of the meanings and consequences of a global focus in local contexts (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004).

The local educational context is often characterized by market or quasi-market mechanisms, which entail an associated cultural industry of branding and ideological self-representation. This is particularly true in the case of international schooling, which tends to be predominantly exclusive (Authors, 2016); these global schools' manifestations resonate with the local discourse within the schooling marketplace. Additionally, these contexts exist within and are connected through a global political economy, which is often characterized through a shared 'geoculture' of liberalism (Wallerstein, 1995:145). Through this connection, locally produced ideologies surrounding international education are attached to a larger set of normative principles and legitimations.

Contemporaneously to the establishment of international schooling, the concepts of international education and the internationalization of education became rooted as widely discussed notions (Hayden, 2011). Nevertheless, although 'international education' is a common term in global discourse, its definition is highly debated and contested (Hayden & Thomson, 2013). Despite the variety of types, meanings and modes of governance, most of these schools address GCE or its synonyms (international mindedness, intercultural competences, global consciousness etc.,) as one their main goals (see for conceptual review: Authors, 2017). Broadly stated, GCE can be described as curricular contents aimed at preparing students to function in global society through the development of understanding of global issues, empathy for people of different origins, multi-cultural appreciation, and global skill sets (Dill, 2013). GCE-related contents can be diverse and may include, among other issues, knowledge of other cultures (Veugelers, 2011), education towards proactivity for activism in the field of human rights, environment protection (Authors, 2018), and development of global responsibility and empathy (Schattle, 2008; 2009). These agenda adopted and promoted by several influential international and supranational organizations such as UNESCO and the OECD (Bamber, Lewin, & White, 2018). These organizations are effectively ensuring that GCE will continue to spread by including it in their education agenda (UNESCO SDG 4.7) and their standardized international examinations (e.g., PISA 2018 test of global competencies). As IB in general, GCE had been criticized on the same basis of elitism and western inclination (Authors, 2018), whereas several typologies have been developed to differentiate among various types of GCE and sometimes to outline the more desired types and associated behaviors (Oxley & Morris, 2013).

Importantly, post-colonial and critical, advocacy based modes of GCE have been recently presented and promoted by several scholars (Arshad-Ayaz, Andreotti, & Sutherland, 2017; Shultz, Pashby, & Godwaldt, 2017). These aim to disrupt the existing hegemony and rebuilt the power relations in the society. Generally, GCE is usually articulated as moral stances towards the world and its inhabitants (Veugelers, 2011) or as desired capabilities for success (Dill, 2013).

The inclusion of contents associated with GCE is often described as a direct response by education systems to the modern, globalized workforce (Myers, 2016). All these together or in various combinations appear in the goals and the curricula of IB and in the demands of parents considering or choosing the international schools (Authors, 2016; 2018).

Moreover, a significant factor in the growth of international schools is the increased demand for English-medium education by parents who wish to provide their children with a competitive advantage in labor markets and higher education (Doherty, 2013; Hickey, 2018; Tarc & Mishra Tarc, 2015; Weenink, 2009). In this context, offering a quality international curriculum is an essential and dominant attribute for such schools, and several international curricula have been established over the years (Bunnell et al., 2017). The IB has positioned itself strategically in most of the aforementioned aspects of international education as a curricular provider that simultaneously encourages an understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures and offering a rigorous curricula, thus placing its students and graduates in a competitive position vis-à-vis global labor markets and higher education admissions (Ball & Nikita, 2014; Cambridge & Thompson 2004). Due to the IBO's prominence in the global market of international schooling and its' assumed universality in terms of assessment and process monitoring, in this study we focus on examination of schools providing an IB accreditations in our query towards better understanding of the meanings of such education as represented by the schools themselves.

A note on a dual goals of the IB

Two prominent motives for implementing the IB coincide with the IB mission statement: international recognition of the IB by higher education institutions and the idealistic mission of the organization. Regarding the former, by cultivating traditional foundations of humanities and exact science as its cornerstones (Doherty, Luke, Shield, & Hincksman, 2012), the IB curriculum presents a comprehensive and profound program in all required disciplines while maintaining a high standard and advanced and reliable self-assessment system (Tarc, 2009). As for the IB's idealistic mission, additional incentive for adopting the program often involves aspiration for intercultural understanding. Roberts (2009, as cited in Doherty & Mu, 2011) notes that the IB defines a "global education" as one that "provides a focus on issues and concerns that affect people and the planet as a whole, notions of systems and interdependence, and a coherent pedagogy" (p. 10). However, critics

such as Tarc (2009) maintain that academia and idealism cannot successfully coincide. Yet despite such criticism, the IB is perceived as valid alternative to local curricula, and its global contents, values, and approaches contribute to the global literacy that is necessary in contemporary society. Notably, some parents living in countries such as Canada, Israel and the US identify the IB as advantageous compared to local curricula in terms of higher education admissions (Authors, 2016; Tarc & Beatty, 2012).

A prominent critique of the IB points to its European and Western origins and image as an imperial project (Tamatea, Hardy, & Ninnes, 2008). In particular, critics claim that Anglo-Saxon Western countries such as the UK, Canada, and the US enjoy a privileged position within IBO strategies, curricula, and philosophy, at the expense of non-western cultures (Gardner-McTaggart, 2011).

In addition, 'international-mindedness,' (overarching construct related to multilingualism, intercultural understanding and global engagement (Hacking et al., 2018)) which is the IB's main articulation of GCE and an annunciation of its ideological mission (Authors, 2017; Sriprakash, Singh, & Jing, 2014), serves as a particular locus of critique. Critics argue that international-mindedness essentially claims normative universal status for a Western mindset that is particularly well-suited to neoliberal political economic contexts (Balarin, 2011). It thereby becomes a disposition of a new, global, elite, and mobile social class, which is reproduced across countries and ironically contributes to widening inequalities in many parts of the world, although it was develop as a measure to foster mutual understanding and equality (Bunnell, 2010; Gardner-McTaggart, 2011). This imaginary new social class is characterized by fluent English, frequent travelling and privilege within national systems of higher education and workplaces—the same attributes that are often intentionally presented as a virtue of international curricula and specifically of the IB (Resnik, 2009).

In this study, through analysis of IB schools' websites, we identify three major approaches for constructing schools' image: globally acknowledged quality, moral global citizenship, and neoliberal global citizenship. We show how these approaches are employed in each of the contexts and discuss theoretical implications. **We suggest further nuanced conceptualization of global citizenship education following blooming discourse developed through this special issue and engagement with contemporary understandings of this concept.**

Data and Methods

In order to study how IB schools represent themselves across differentsocial, economic, and educational contexts, we analyzed website text from 151 IB schools in four different locations: Hong Kong, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Chicago (USA). We selected these four

locations because they vary in their models of public/private educational provision, economic development and levels of international migration. Data on each of the selected sites are presented in Table 1 and summarized as follows:

Place table 1 here

(1) Hong Kong is characterized by high levels of private education, including international education, and high levels of international migration; 17% of secondary school students attend a private school (World Bank, 2017), while international migrants comprise 38.9% of the total population (United Nations et al., 2014).

(2) Lowest levels in our sample levels of private education characterize the Netherlands; only 3% of Dutch children attend a private school. However, seven of the existing 17 IBO schools (41.2%) in the Netherlands are private. The country has moderate levels of international migration, with migrants comprising 11.7% of the population (United Nations et al., 2014).

(3) The UAE is characterized by very high levels of private educational provision, including international education; 61.3% of students attend a private school (World Bank, 2017). The UAE also has very high levels of international mobility, with international migrants comprising 83.8% of the total population (United Nations et al., 2014).

(4) Comparatively low levels of private schooling characterize the United States; at the secondary level, 7.9% of students attend a private school (World Bank, 2017). The Chicago is unique in our data in that the IB schools sampled were all public (state-funded) schools; the IB was incorporated into the public system as a strategy to improve outcomes at (sometimes failing) urban schools (Roderick et al., 2008). In relation to other countries in our sample, international migration is low, constituting 14.3% of the population (United Nations et al., 2014), but the school system as the society in the US are highly stratified along the racial and socio-economic lines, thus disproportionally high percentage of immigrants can be found in the (usually bi-lingual) IB schools.

We explored websites of schools in these four locales to capture the schools' descriptions. We specifically focused our analysis on the representation of the international dimensions within the schools.

School websites have been used recently as an important source of information in various studies, including a qualitative analysis of schools' marketing techniques (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016) and analysis of schools' images in general. Dimopoulos and Tsami (2017: p2) suggest that: "Specifically, school websites are used as multipurpose tools with many simultaneous functions such as presenting schools' mission and policies; providing information about the curriculum, the teaching staff, and the organization of school life; supporting students' learning through the provision of

extracurricular materials; or displaying a variety of samples of students' work and activities. Therefore, school websites act as a public-relations tool in the hands of school managers, in their effort to attract more privileged students from their local communities". Following Tamatea, Hardy, and Ninnes (2008) who analyzed the global discourse in Asia-Pacific international schools websites and concluded that despite the various contexts, "school web pages reproduce **similar** (our emphasis) discourses in the construction of the student as an individual, member of a community and world-changing global citizen" (p. 157), we suggest focus on various geographic and provision based contexts (private vs. public schools) in order to examine the meanings of the "international" in these representations. While critically schools' websites serve for marketing and might not represent the realms on the ground, examination of such representations especially given the expected homogenization caused by the IB regulations, might provide a valuable source for understanding the local dimensions in the IB schools in the examined locations and beyond them.

We concentrated our analysis mainly (but not solely) within the following webpage headings: 'About us,' 'Mission & Vision,' 'Principal's welcome,' 'Our campus,' About the IB,' and 'Our history.' We collected text from these pages that would provide insights into how the schools understand the concept of international education and how this understanding relates to their own aspirational self-representations (Wilkins, 2011).

Our methods of analysis closely followed the canonical approach of Corbin and Strauss (1990), which has been the subject of much subsequent discussion and was applied extensively (Creswell, 2013; Flick, 2009). To develop a coding frame, we randomly sampled 20 school websites from the full dataset (of 151). Each of the authors individually and qualitatively explored each school website included in the sample, followed by a joint discussion and the construction of an analytical coding frame to be applied to the full dataset. We compared different phrasing and structure options for final categorization and then thoroughly analyzed all the 151 websites.

Our first step in the analysis was 'open coding' of the collected documents: we inductively developed and applied codes that labeled the content of passages of the text. Our second step in the analysis was 'axial coding,' through which these labels were related to three key approaches that gradually formed our 'core categories': World Quality, Neoliberal Global Citizenship, and Moral Global Citizenship (Table 2). Finally, we applied 'selective coding' by relating these three forms of international education to the social and economic contexts in which they were formed. In other words, our selective coding involved linking the key categories in our data to the economic and social contexts of education (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

Analysis and discussion

Through the coding and analysis process, we revealed three primary, overarching approaches in which schools construct their image and desired aims: as a quality signifier, as neoliberal global citizenship, and as a path to moral global citizenship. While recognizing that website representations may be complex and contested (Authors, 2016), we identified these three dominant approaches as ways in which the schools make sense of their missions in relation to the international dimension in education. We briefly detail below each of the approaches and then compare the appearance of these approaches across various locations and lastly discuss the possible implications.

Place Tables 2 and 3 here

International Education as a World Quality Signifier

We found that in our sample, international standing of the school is often used as a generic indicator of high educational standards and outcomes. Thus educational quality was often transposed to a measure of geographic scope—for example, in the term 'world class' schools. This conceptualization is largely consistent with the IB's status as a global educational brand (Tarc, 2009). Many school websites in all our contexts referenced quality in a general sense; for example, one school in Hong Kong noted, "we work hard to ensure a high standard of curriculum delivery, our staff comes from around the globe and our facilities are world class." Other schools' websites specifically related quality to the IBO curriculum, with a school in the UAE claiming that "the IB program provides students with a world class, inquiry based learning experience." Notably, a common trend among the school websites is to discuss quality with respect to various factors external to the actual education, including facilities, technology, external accreditation, and national policies. We argue that the shaping of the quality in these schools was processed through somehow external and not-pedagogical forms, while addressing the whole world as an artificial point of reference, thus emptying quality from its specific meanings. This approach and the deployment of 'world class' is exemplified by one school in the UAE, which states,

> The future is bright, especially with the recent upgrade of our facilities, [School Name] International School is well positioned to support the UAE National Agenda in the push to realize the dream of providing our students with a truly *world class* (our emphasis) education.

Overall, one dominant construction of international education was simply to transpose academic excellence onto a geographic scale. In this sense, 'international' is often framed as a signifier of quality, building on the assumption that international schools are of the highest quality.

In all contexts, we observed that quality featured prominently on school websites (from lowest of 35.15% in Chicago schools to 54.29% in Netherlands the highest); the emphasis on quality is near ubiquitous in education and is not likely to be attributable to the IB curricula of the schools studied.

Therefore, international-quality representations are not solely dependent on the IBO brand as a premium educational product (Bunnell, 2010), as we found great variation in the extent to which schools mentioned IBO-specific topics (such as the IBO mission and learner profile) (Bunnell, 2010).

Additionally, very few schools display their IBO exams statistics or details of universities where their graduates were admitted. Thus, it seems that perceptions regarding the quality of a school are dependent on a mixture of attributes that cannot be accurately assessed by prospective students and their parents when exploring available data from websites. In this regard, our findings contrast those in the literature identifying a growing tendency towards medicalized-like measurement and display of 'objective' results by educational institutions (Gorur, 2016; Lewis & Lingard, 2015).

Instead, we traced across data frequent quality claims that relied heavily on additional factors such as non-IBO accreditation, high-caliber faculty, educational technology and modern facilities. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate a tendency to embrace the phrase 'world class' as both an "unthinking cliché" and a "linguistic adjunct to globalization" (Alexander, 2010:811); in this sense, the 'international' status of schools helps to operationalize a concept that is inherently elusive, ambiguous, and difficult to measure.

Overall, our findings demonstrate that the world quality approach is substantially more prominent than the other two categories in the websites examined (in three out of four studied locations). Notably, the locations with the highest and lowest emphasis on quality—the Netherlands and Chicago, respectively—are admitting very different population within the IB schools, when in Chicago these schools mainly cater lower SES population with immigrant background (Roderick et al., 2008), in the Netherlands IB schools are attended by higher echelons of the society (Weenink, 2009). Since bringing IB provision to state schools advocated as a measure of raising quality, the relative lack of mentions of quality in Chicago schools is concerning and should be examined closely in the future research.

Moral Global Citizenship

International education is often conceptualized in terms of universal values and intercultural competencies associated with global citizenship (Authors, 2017a;b;c). Notably, the IB concept of 'international-mindedness' presents a normative framework for the values, dispositions, and competencies appropriate to life in a globalized world. Accordingly, a school in Hong Kong states, "We want students to be aware of the world and their responsibilities in it; who are internationally minded and accepting of individual differences." Other schools specifically mentioned responsible global citizenship as one of their principle goals; thus, another UAE school aims "to create an

outstanding, multi-cultural learning community which empowers students to achieve their potential, become life-long learners and responsible global citizens." The concept of social responsibility and social action also featured prominently in this particular view of international education, through phrases such as a "creative, critical and meaningful contribution to society."

In contrast, schools Chicago schools placed more emphasis on diversity, recognizing the multi-ethnic composition of the social context (while still implying the economic aspect of global citizenship through several mentions of becoming "productive" citizens).

This approach was widely used in Chicago schools with statements like:

However, the construction of global citizenship found in other schools' sites aligns much more closely to the notion of neoliberal global citizenship approach that is detailed below.

Neoliberal Global citizenship

From the neoliberal perspective, education is primarily valued for its instrumental utility, as a form of human capital or as a means to another end. Thus, many schools conceptualize 'international education' as a symbol of access to global networks, labor markets, and admissions to university. In many cases, international schools specifically reference their own record in regard to the status competition of world university rankings (Marginson, 2008; Souto-Otero and Enders, 2015). For example, one school in the UAE boasted that

> "…students have been accepted by some of the most prestigious universities and colleges around the world. [School Name] students have gone to 33 out of the top 50 universities in the world and 36 of the top 50 universities in the U.S."

Some of the schools in the dataset employ the IBO brand in signifying access to elite networks. Thus, one school in the UAE pointed out that "in the UK, IBO graduates are more likely to attend a top university and more likely to enter a professional program than their counterparts graduating from National Curriculum schools," while another noted the "IB program correlates well with success at Harvard." In both cases, references are made to future destinations for labor-market migration (the US and UK) through access to elite universities. This emphasis on anticipated future mobility was found, albeit less frequently, even in the Netherlands, which has much lower outbound migration overall. For example, one school noted, "our students have been readily accepted to universities and colleges in the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands."

Unsurprisingly, given trends in international student flows from the global South to the global North, which frequently cited as a pathway that leads from IB diploma to Ivy league university (Authors, 2013), schools in the US did not cite international university admission (like in the UAE and Hong Kong), but did cite 100% university admission rates, the "career-ready" status of

their graduates, and a "laser-like focus on college readiness." Again, such a prism offers evidence that national and international contexts interact and reinforce one another; for example, one school in Hong Kong boasted symbolically about the valued "dual passport" provided by the IB and Canadian accreditation it offers.

> Neoliberal notions of GCE were articulated in this citation from the UAE school:
>
> Completing a quality education at [School Name] means that boys and girls will be able to travel and work anywhere in the world, achieve success in their professional and personal lives, and become the best global citizens.

Neoliberal Global citizenship is equated with advantageous labor migration and an element of competition ("the best global citizens"). In other cases, the reference to economic value was less overt; for example, another UAE school seeks to develop students'

> character, creativity, values, personal leadership and the spirit of enterprise necessary for them to achieve their full potential as global citizens and leaders of the future.

Cross context analysis

Notably, the three approaches discussed above relate to different social, economic, and educational contexts. Table 3 shows how the three dimensions we coded for differed across the locations in this study. Each row shows how coded material for a given national context was distributed across the three conceptualizations of international schooling identified above, measured by the coded instances (i.e., the number of times a code is used in that context). Thus, each cell in the table represents the number of times a code relating to one of the three conceptualizations of international education occurs as a percentage of the total number of times all codes are used for a given location. Each row totals 100%: all the coded material for a given location is distributed among these three groups of codes, but the distribution among the three types of international schooling is quite different for each location.

Results show that the construction of international education differs significantly across the sites studied. For example, schools in Chicago emphasize mostly moral global citizenship, while the Netherlands and UAE emphasize the world quality of education. However, these differences do not tie in neatly to differences in the demographics of the locations studied. For instance, quality of education featured prominently in locations with both high privatization (the UAE) and low privatization (the Netherlands). Using a statistical test of differences in coding between country, we found that the concept of international education is produced differently in these contexts ($p < 0.05$).

However, comparison with key features of the various locations (Table 1) also shows that local constructions are not a straightforward, simple outcome of the local political economy. Therefore, an understanding of global discourses as local production must include the caveat that mediating forces and complexities (such as a micro-contextual situations in the specific neighborhood or city; the characteristics of the local and migrant populations at the specific location etc.,) are might appear to be significant.

IBO programs are often characterized as having two missions, which address the academic/pragmatic and social/ideological goals of international schooling, respectively (Tarc, 2009). For example, the strive towards broad recognition of the academic rigor of the IBO by higher education systems is pragmatic, while the goals of international understanding to support world peace serves an ideological purpose. Our analysis supports these two missions by affiliating the coded approach 'World Quality' with the IBO's pragmatic aim and aligning the coded 'Moral Global Citizenship' approach with the respective ideological aim.

However, we identify a third approach to international education—one that is related to both the pragmatic and ideological aims, and at the same time converges around distinctly different ideas of access to global networks. This approach, which we termed 'Neoliberal Global Citizenship,' refers to attributes related to perceived demands of the global labor market and elite higher education institutions, such as proficiency in the English language and competency in an international educational environment (i.e., international students/teachers). In other words, ideological rationales are being converted into pragmatic and practical ones. The convergence principle is economic in nature and focuses on individual attributes. Indeed, this construct corresponds with a neoliberal approach towards global citizenship education (McGrew, 2008), which identifies the need for global citizenship education to allow individuals a competitive stance in the global economy and labor market. In this footpath, schools display projected knowledge and skills to be acquired by students during their study period at school not merely for educational purposes, but for future productivity aims (i.e., employment) and economic gains (Ball, 2012). Thus, it seems that expectations of educational preparation for employment have trickled down from their traditional place in higher education to lower educational levels—as revealed in this study, to secondary schools. For example, schools are building on the perception that studying in international surroundings may be instrumental to the attainment of individual cosmopolitan capital that can later increase opportunities to engage with an international-oriented workplace (Reay et al., 2007). This phenomenon aligns with the growing similarity between the aims of higher education institutions and secondary schools in regard to internationalization practices. Furthermore, such an understanding of the benefits of international education may also signal an educational tendency towards increased individual agency

that replaces employment market responsibilities formerly attributed to the government (Authors, 2017).

Although the Neoliberal Global Citizenship approach is less prevalent than the world Quality and Moral Global Citizenship constructions of international education, it is surprisingly substantial in all locations regardless of the local migrant population percentage or the public/private nature of the school. Moreover, instances of Neoliberal Global Citizenship representation were found very similar in the Netherlands, Chicago, UAE and Hong Kong, accounting for between 19.74% and 23.03% of all coded statements at each location.

Conclusion

To conclude, our findings problematize the treatment of global educational discourses such as those on international schooling as homogenous and decontextualized. Rather than a global phenomenon that is imported into local contexts, our results highlight the extent to which actors in local contexts produce international education on the basis of different motivations, aims, and purposes.

Given the growing prominence of international education in global education policy (Resnik, 2016), its wide geographical spread (Bunnell, 2011), and pressures on schools to comply with common standards and norms (Authors, 2016), a key question is the extent to which concepts such as global citizenship hold coherency across different locations worldwide. Although the term itself implies global consciousness (Oxley & Morris, 2013) and is central to the IB's ideological focus through its concept of 'international-mindedness' (Sriprakash, Singh, & Jing, 2014), our analysis shows substantial differentiation in how schools construct this concept across the four locations studied.

Although the IB offers schools a conceptual structure and vocabulary to discuss global citizenship, these are articulated differently in school websites in different locations. As demonstrated by the quotes offered as examples above, references to an imaginary global society were found across all local contexts, and directly reflect the IB's suggested concepts and vocabulary. However, schools differed in the functions that they aspired students to fulfill in a future global society. This difference is particularly evident in the distinction between economic-oriented Neoliberal Global Citizenship terms such as "productive citizens" and the more ideological approaches that mention social responsibility, community service, and ethical citizenship.

Thus, our findings support the conclusion offered in the literature that the concept of global citizenship is understood in multiple and often contradictory ways (Oxley & Morris, 2013). In particular, we show that its meaning varies considerably, even within local contexts. The pattern of local variation also applies to the global brand of the IB; although it offers a standardized curriculum and set of assessments on a global scale, the ways in which schools identify with the IB varies between schools, supporting the emerging notion in the literature that the IB is overly ambitious as well as ambiguous, lacking a clear universal interpretation and essentially shaped by local pedagogic agents (Doherty & Mu, 2011).

This special issue aimed to address, yet underexplored contextual manifestations of global citizenship education. In this study we explore the schools' self-representations as a means to unveil the meanings and the articulations of the international education discourse. As GCE being actively promoted by schools and IB schools in particular, we argue that this specific desired outcome is framed rather distinctively in various contexts. The main novelty of this study is the conceptualization of the three distinct forms of GCE that emerged from out analyses and more importantly their partial incompliance with the normalized IB discourse. As more nations are considering adoption of the IB curricula for various rationales (to improve quality, to diversify the curricula, to attract international pupils, to reform the state education etc.,), it is important to note the various approaches that schools may adopt, adapting and transforming IB to their contexts and needs.

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Table 1: Characteristics and Sampling Data of Countries Studied

Context	Migrant Population (%)	Outward Migration (%)	National Private School Enrolment (%)	Schools Sampled	Private Schools Sampled (%)
Hong Kong	38.9%	2.1%	17.97%	50	90%
Netherlands	11.7%	0.7%	3.37%	17	41%
UAE	83.7%	4.3%	61.33%	33	97%
United States	14.3%	1.6%	7.91%	53	8%

Table 2: Summary of Open Codes and Axial Categories

World Quality	Neoliberal Global Citizenship	Moral Global citizenship
Standards	English Language	Values and Ethics
Teachers and Staff	International Students as an asset to develop certain capabilities	Social Responsibility
Parental Engagement	International Staff	
Accreditation	Employment	Character Development
Student-Centered	University Admission	Diversity
Campus and Facilities		Community Service
Academic Achievement		Peace and Tolerance
Educational Technology		Intercultural Understanding
Personalization of Learning		
Qualifications and Experience		

Table 3: Coded instances by theme and context

	World Quality	Neoliberal Global Citizenship	Moral Global Citizenship	Total
Hong Kong	46.43%	22.32%	31.25%	100%
Netherlands	54.29%	22.53%	23.18%	100%
UAE	52.19%	19.74%	28.07%	100%
Chicago	35.15%	23.03%	41.82%	100%
ANOVA Results				
SS-Within Groups	593.8	113.5	157.9	
SS-Residual	1191.8	576.4	1072.3	
F Value	24.75**	9.77**	7.32**	

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, SS – Summed squares

Note: The number of codes falling into the three main categories (world quality, neoliberal global citizenship and moral global citizenship) for each of the countries studied, as a percentage of the total number of codes for that country. All differences were significant at $p < 0.01$ in an ANOVA test with the number of codes as the dependent variable, the context/country as the independent variable, and the school website as the unit of observation, with 3 degrees of freedom between groups and 149 residual degrees of freedom.